



## **INTRODUCTION**

The Population, Housing, and Community Development element provides both past trends and future forecasts of population and housing trends. These trends and forecasts are a primary basis for planning needed public services and facilities related to community development.

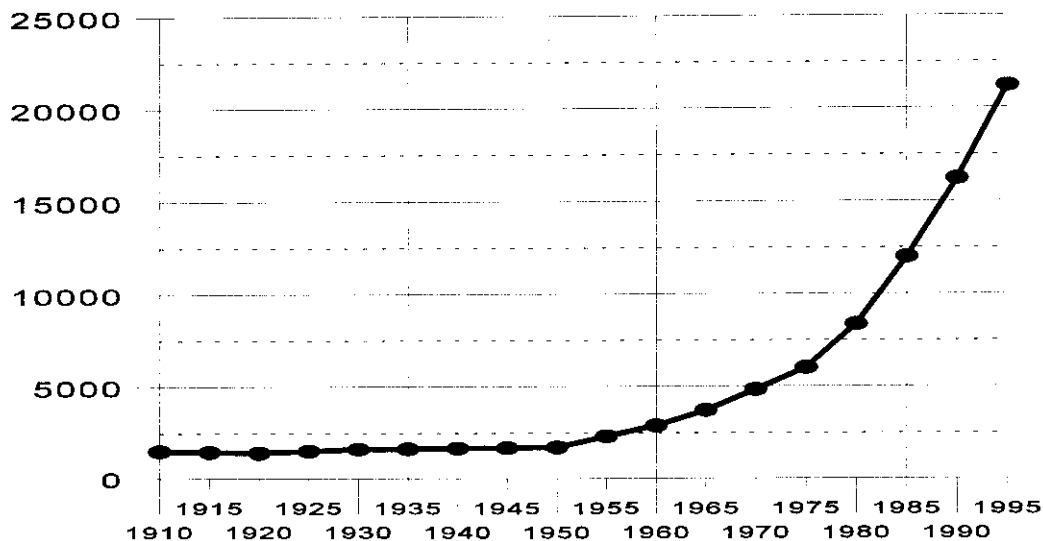
## **POPULATION**

### **Population Growth History**

This section of the Plan discusses the growth and characteristics of Leesburg's population. Past and present population trends are examined as background for a 2015 population forecast. The characteristics of town residents are analyzed to help identify their social, economic and public service needs. The analysis is based on 1990 U.S. Census data, which provides the most recent and authoritative region-wide information base.

Figure 3.1 shows that Leesburg did not experience significant growth until the 1950's. In fact, the town's population grew by only about seven percent total between 1910 and 1950. Expanding influence of the Washington regional economy and the addition of new businesses to Leesburg contributed to an almost nine-fold increase in the town's population between 1950 and 1990. This represented a compounded average growth rate of 5.8 percent annually over the 40-year period, compared to 3.6 percent annually for Loudoun and 2.9 percent for Northern Virginia.

**Figure 3.1  
Population Growth**



It should be noted that the high growth shown for the 1980-1990 decade (about 6.8% annually) includes the addition of 1,485 people through annexation in 1984. When this factor is discounted, the actual growth rate was closer to 5.1 percent annually. Also, growth subsequent to the annexation has been influenced by the added land available for development.

### **Present Town Population**

The U.S. Census indicated an April 1, 1990, Leesburg population of 16,202. Based on new housing units added since the 1990 Census, the town's population as of January 1, 1997, was estimated at 25,000. The estimate assumes the vacancy rates and household size by housing type reflected in the 1990 census. Table 3.1 shows the estimated annual population growth of Leesburg since the 1990 Census. Estimates are based on housing units added annually.

The Greater Leesburg Area, which includes the town and rural areas around it as defined in Element One, is estimated to have a total population of over 27,000.

**Table 3.1**  
**Town Population Estimates, 1990-1995**

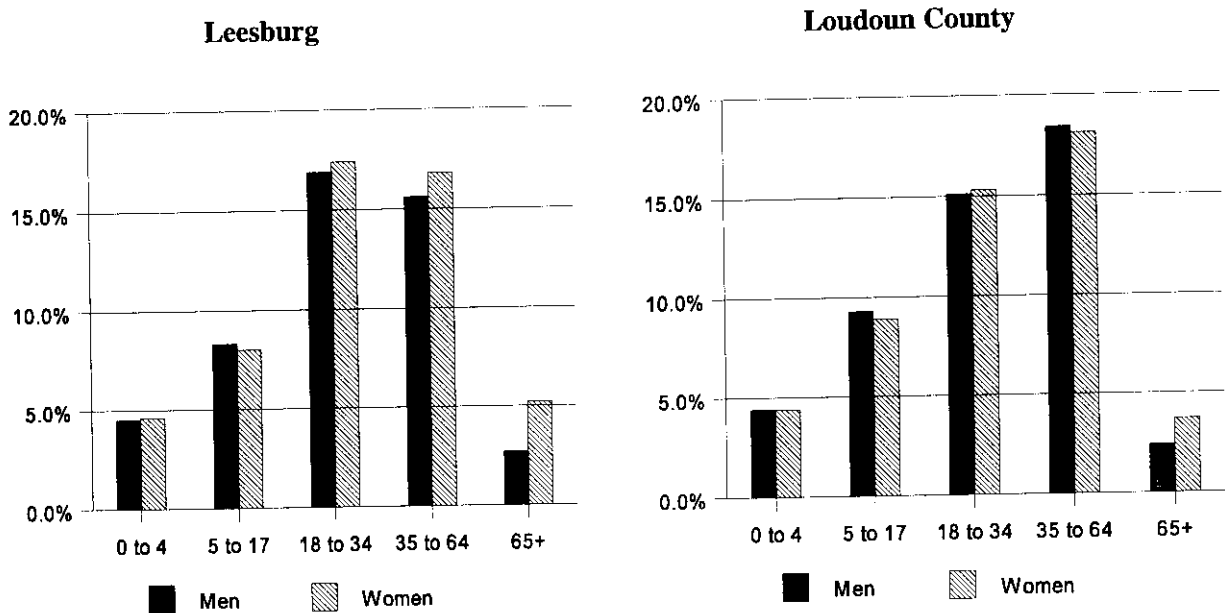
<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Growth Rate</b>
1990	16,202 (1)	
1991	17,112	5.6%
1992	17,519	2.4%
1993	18,245	4.1%
1994	19,500	6.9%
1995	21,146	8.4%
1996	23,000	8.7%
1997	25,000	8.7%
<i>(1) Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Planning Department</i>		

### **Population Characteristics**

#### **Age-Sex**

The large influx of new people to Leesburg over the past decade has brought changes to the cultural and economic structure of the town's population. The following population charts show the 1990 age and sex profiles for the town compared to Loudoun County. Analysis of the population by age group and sex is useful in planning for public services such as schools and social services.

**Figure 3.2**  
**1990 Population Distribution**



Source: 1990 U.S. Census

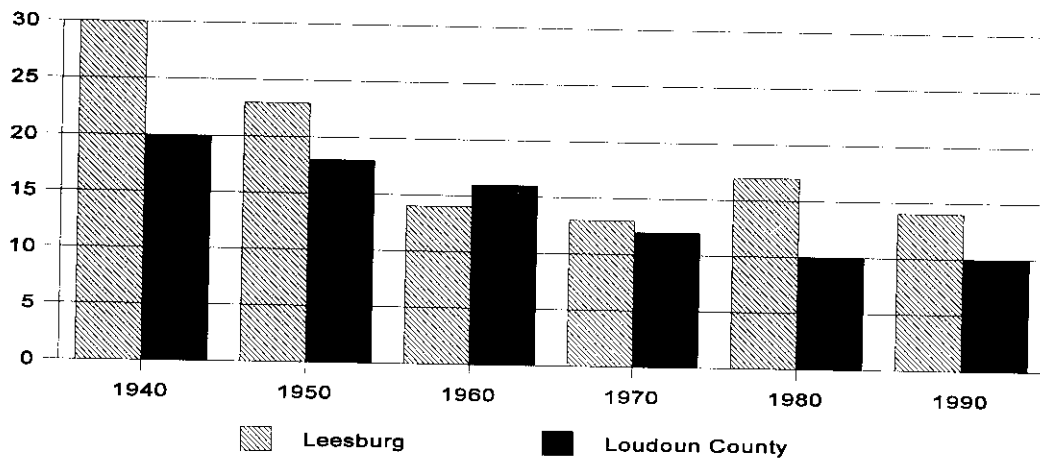
The charts above illustrate three aspects in which Leesburg's population differs from that of Loudoun County as a whole:

- The presence of young adults is more pronounced in town. Leesburg's largest age cohort is the 18-34 group, while the county's is the 35-64 group.
- Leesburg has a proportionately larger elderly population than Loudoun County (8% compared to 6% for the county)
- The town has a lower percentage of school-aged children than the county (16% versus 19%)

#### Racial Mix

The Town of Leesburg historically has had a higher percentage of minorities relative to Loudoun County. According to the 1990 Census, 15 percent of the town's population was minority, compared to 10 percent in Loudoun County. Figure 3.3 shows the comparative trend for the past 50 years. While the total number of minority residents in both the county and the town has increased over that period, the relative proportion of minorities in the general population has decreased.

**Figure 3.3**  
**Percent Minority Population, 1940-1990**



*Source: 1990 Census*

#### Educational Attainment

For Leesburg residents 25 and older, the 1990 Census found that

- 83 percent were high school graduates or higher, compared to 87 percent in Loudoun County and 90% in Northern Virginia
- 29 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 33 percent in Loudoun and 45 percent in Northern Virginia

#### Nativity

According to the 1990 Census:

- 95 percent of Leesburg residents were born in the United States. Of these, almost half were born in Virginia.
- Of the 5 percent of residents who were foreign-born, half had entered the United States since 1980.

#### Source of Newcomers

Census data in 1990 showed that the majority of newcomers to Leesburg had come here from elsewhere in Virginia, primarily from Loudoun County. Of all persons taking up residence in Leesburg during 1985-1990:

- 41% came from elsewhere in Loudoun.
- 20% came from other parts of Virginia.
- 34% came from another state.
- 5% came from abroad.

### **Income Characteristics**

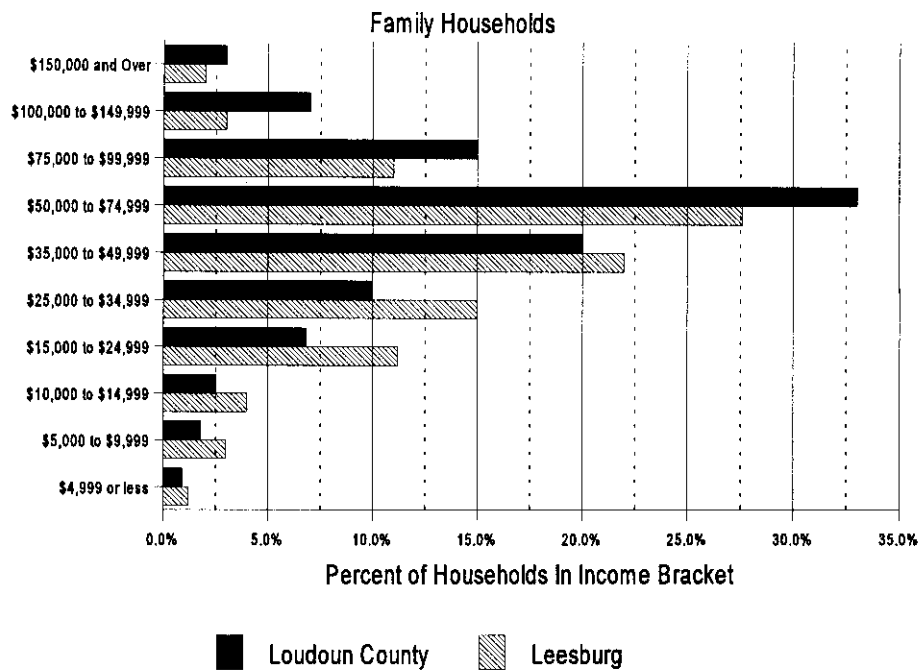
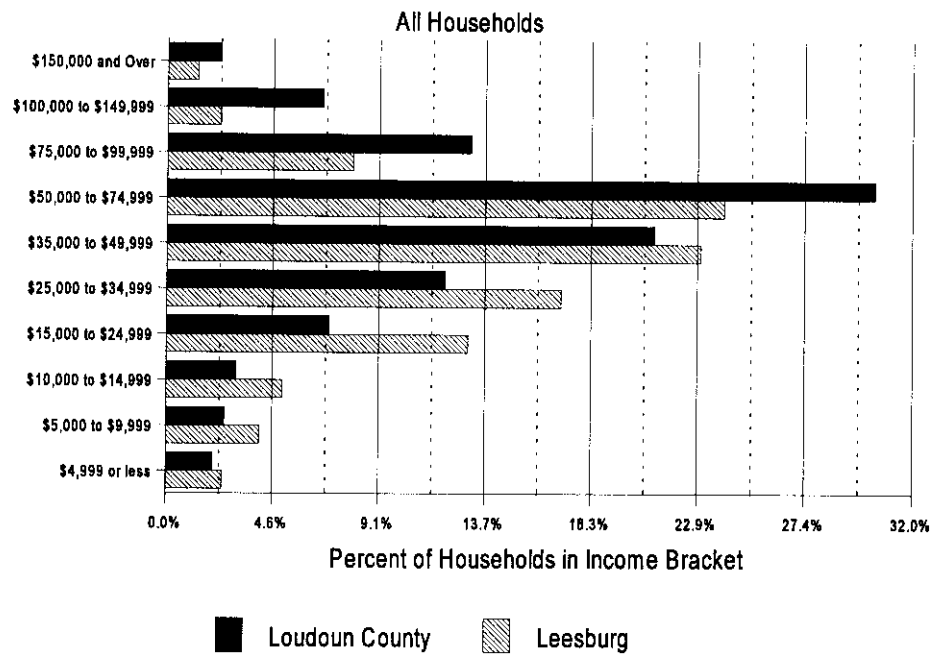
A general indication of a community's relative economic health is its median income. Income data from the 1990 Census indicates that income levels in Leesburg are significantly lower than in Loudoun County as a whole. Several factors may contribute to this disparity. As the comparative population distribution charts in Figure 3.2 show, Leesburg's largest age cohort is 18-34-year-olds, whereas for the whole county the largest component is those aged 35-64, generally regarded as the prime earning years. Also, the poverty rate for Leesburg residents, while relatively low, is almost twice that for the county. In addition, less expensive housing opportunities--primarily multi-family rental units--are more available in town. According to 1990 Census data, 62 percent of Loudoun County's multi-family housing was located in Leesburg.

Table 3.2 gives comparative median and per capita income data for Leesburg and Loudoun County; median data is not available for the Northern Virginia region. Figure 3.4 shows the percentage distribution of households by income bracket for both Leesburg and Loudoun. Note the county's predominance in the upper brackets (above \$50,000).

**Table 3.2**  
**Median and Per Capita Income, 1990**

	<b>Leesburg</b>	<b>Loudoun</b>
<b>Median Household</b>	\$39,887	\$52,064
<b>Median Family</b>	\$44,626	\$56,006
<b>Per Capita</b>	\$17,574	\$20,757
<i>Source: 1990 U.S. Census</i>		

**Figure 3.4**  
**Distribution of Households**  
**by Income Bracket**



Source: 1990 U.S. Census

### Poverty Status

The 1990 Census shows that the percentage of Leesburg residents living below the federally-defined poverty level declined since 1980, reflecting the trend in most Northern Virginia jurisdictions. However, the town's percentage remains higher than the county's and region's. This higher poverty rate is characteristic of most of the region's older urban centers. Comparative statistics are shown in Tables 3.3 and 3.4.

**Table 3.3**  
**Percent of Population Below Poverty:**  
**Regional Comparison, 1980 and 1990**

Year	Leesburg	Loudoun County	Northern Virginia
1980	9.2%	6.6%	5.2%
1990	6.1%	3.1%	4.2%
Source: U.S. Census			

**Table 3.4**  
**Poverty Status, 1990**

LIVING BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	Leesburg	Loudoun	No. VA
% of the total population	6.1	3.1	4.2
% of all children under 18	8.6	3.7	4.6
% of all persons over 65	13.2	8.8	5.2
% of all families	3.8	1.8	(not avail)
% of all female householder families	15.5	8.7	(not avail)
Source: 1990 U.S. Census			

The Census analysis of Leesburg's population reveals that poverty status is more prevalent among minorities, especially minority children, and the elderly. As Table 3.5 shows, nearly one-half of elderly black persons live below the poverty level, as do one-fourth of black children. Poverty data for families shows that single-mother households have an incidence of poverty four times greater than all family households. This analysis suggests a need to provide an adequate level of human services and income-supplementing programs for these elements of the population. Selected information is shown in Tables 3.5 and 3.6. The breakdown is by significant racial components and the Hispanic-origin ethnic group. Note that persons of Hispanic origin may belong to any racial group.



**Table 3.5**  
**Poverty Status of Persons by Race, 1990**

Category	All Groups	White	Black	Asian/ Pac Isl	Hispanic Origin
All persons	6.1%	4.2%	19.7%	7.3%	2.0%
Children under 18	8.6%	6.0%	25.8%	9.1%	2.9%
Elderly (65+)	13.2%	7.9%	48.3%	0.0%	0.0%
<i>Source: 1990 U.S. Census</i>					

**Table 3.6**  
**Poverty Status of Families by Race, 1990**

Category	All Groups	White	Black	Asian/ Pacific Islands	Hispanic Origin
All Families	3.8%	2.5%	12.4%	12.7%	0.0%
Married Couple	1.4%	1.1%	5.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Male Householder	6.8%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%	None
Female Householder	15.5%	10.4%	27.5%	56.3%	None
<i>Source: 1990 U.S. Census</i>					

## **HOUSING**

### **Overview**

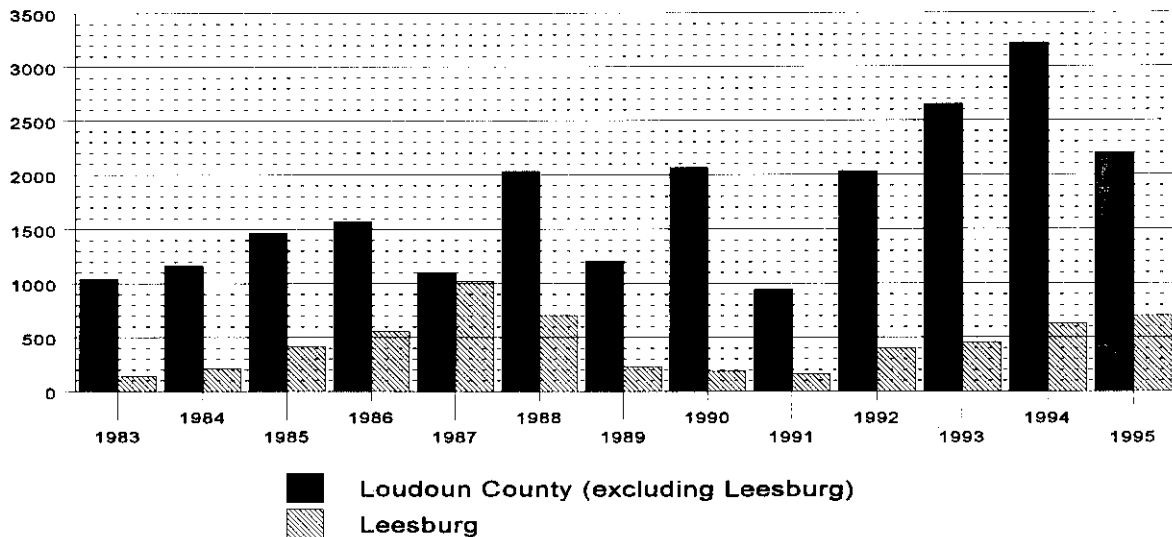
The characteristics of Leesburg's homes and neighborhoods provide insight into the town's population characteristics and tastes, as well as its general economic vitality. An analysis of trends in the number, type, and condition of Leesburg's dwelling units, as well as in the average size of households, assists the town in identifying housing and public service facility needs.

### **Total Housing Stock**

According to Census data, a total of 3,780 housing units were added to the town between 1980 and 1990; 68 percent of those new units were added between 1985 and 1989. The total housing stock at the end of 1979 was 3,214 units, as reported by the 1980 Census. Total housing stock by the end of 1989 was 6,994. Since the 1990 Census, 1,028 additional housing units were added to the town's stock as of April 1, 1994 (based on occupancy certificates issued by the town).

Loudoun County residential building permit totals for 1983 through 1995 are shown in Figure 3.5. The graph indicates the town's share of total permits each year. NOTE: Permit data produces slightly different cumulative figures from Census totals and occupancy permit data due to the lag between building permit issuance and construction completion.

**Figure 3.5**  
**Residential Construction 1983-1995**  
Showing Leesburg portion of total building permits issued by Loudoun County



Sources: Leesburg Planning Department and  
Loudoun County Department of Economic Development

Two points can be drawn from the foregoing data on growth of the housing stock:

- The 3,780 units built in Leesburg between 1980 and 1990 was greater than the pre-existing housing inventory, which took over 200 years to accumulate.
- As indicated in the bar chart, recent rapid growth was subject to wide fluctuation from year to year, reflecting general economic conditions.

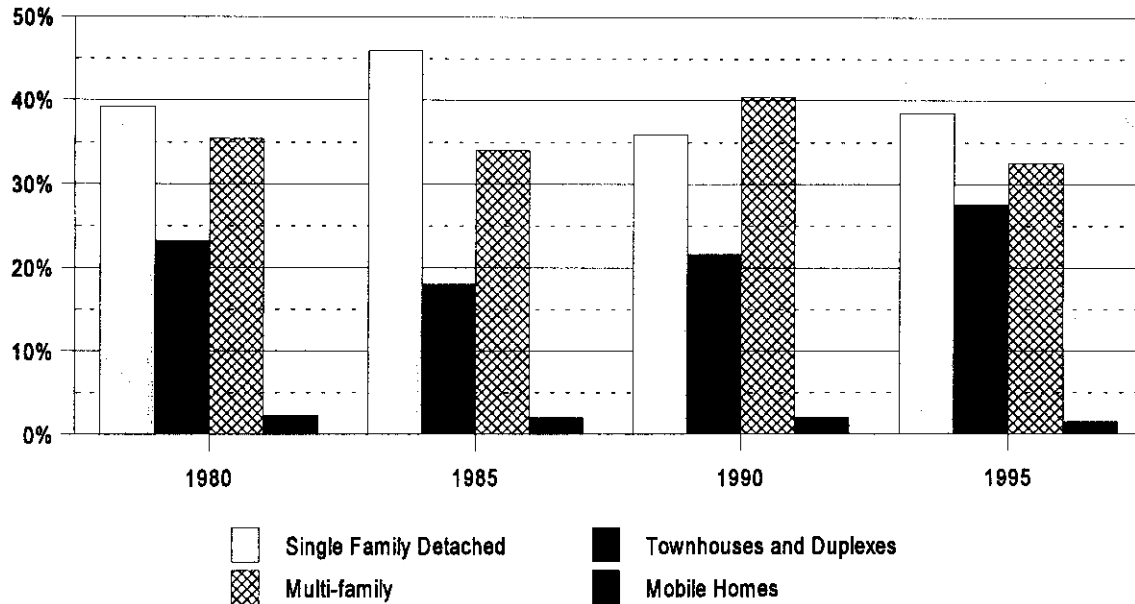
### **Housing Characteristics**

Leesburg contains a wide variety of housing types, sizes and styles that provide a diversity of housing opportunities for current and prospective town residents.

#### Housing Types

An analysis of the changing mix of housing types in Leesburg helps in understanding and projecting changes in population characteristics and the demand for various public and private services. Figure 3.5 provides a comparison of the town's housing mix in 1980 and 1990. The most significant point of comparison is that, during that decade, multi-family surpassed single-family detached as the predominant housing type. However, since 1990 the single family detached category has regained a slight lead, having accounted for a majority of all new housing units added.

**Figure 3.6**  
**Housing Mix, 1980-1990**



Source: 1980 and 1990 U.S. Censuses

Multi-family and townhouse units together account for 62 percent of the housing stock. The current inventory by type is shown in Table 3.7. For purposes of this discussion, identification of housing types follows U.S. Census definitions:

- **Single-Family Detached (SFD):** A one-unit structure detached from any other structure; that is, with open space on all sides. Includes mobile homes with permanent room additions.
- **Single-Family Attached (SFA):** A one-unit structure which has a wall or walls extending from ground to roof separating it from adjoining structures. Includes side-by-side duplexes and townhouses situated either on individual lots or in condominium developments.
- **Multi-Family (MF):** Units in structures containing two or more housing units, typically designated apartments, whether rented or owned (e.g., condos).
- **Mobile Home (MH):** Mobile homes to which no permanent rooms have been added.
- **Other:** Living quarters that do not fit the previous categories; for example, campers, vans and tents.

Table 3.7  
Current Housing Inventory (1995)

	SFD	SFA	MF	MH & Other	Total
1990 Census Count	2,514	1,512	2,828	140	6,994
Added Since Census*	1,146	828	410	0	2,384
Existing as of 12/1/95	3,660	2,340	3,238	140	9,378
* Based on Interpolation of Building Permits Issued					

#### Average Household Size

There has been a steady decline in the average number of persons per dwelling unit in Leesburg, from 3.2 in 1960 to 2.5 in 1990, according to the U.S. Census of Population. Leesburg's drop parallels the trend of the county and region as a whole, but is also due in part to a change in the town's mix of housing types. The town's 1990 average household size of 2.5 compares to 2.8 in the county.

#### Occupancy

In the 1990 Census, the vacancy rate for all housing units was 9.3 percent. Rental units accounted for the majority of the vacancies (71 percent). Of the 6,342 occupied units, 55 percent were owner-occupied and 45 percent were renter-occupied. The percentage of renters in Leesburg is much higher than in the county as a whole (27 percent); this is probably due to the concentration of multi-family units, which are more likely to be rentals, in the town. While Leesburg had 21 percent of the county's total housing units in 1990, it had 62 percent of the multi-family units. In contrast, the town had only 12 percent of the county's total inventory of single-family dwellings. In other categories of housing, Leesburg's share was roughly consistent with the overall percentage.

#### Housing Age

Census data indicate that about 80 percent of Leesburg's housing was built since 1970. Therefore, the overall condition of the housing stock can be expected to be very good. Leesburg housing also spans a broad period of time, with 5 percent of the town's housing stock dating before 1940. This broad age span is an asset, providing Leesburg with significant architectural diversity.

#### Substandard Housing

Leesburg has made an active effort to eliminate or reduce the amount of substandard housing, which is defined by the Census Bureau as housing that lacks complete plumbing/kitchen facilities or is overcrowded. As Table 3.8 shows, there were only nine housing units lacking complete facilities in 1990. While the number of overcrowded units increased between 1980 and 1990, the percentage of overcrowded units in the total housing inventory declined significantly.

**Table 3.8**  
**Substandard Housing Units: 1980 and 1990**

Condition	1980		1990	
	Number of Units	% of all Units	Number of Units	% of all Units
Lack complete plumbing	44	1.4%	9	0.1%
Overcrowded*	72	2.2%	96	1.5%
*more than one person per room Source: 1980 and 1990 U.S. Censuses				

### Housing Cost and Opportunities

Housing costs and opportunities determine, to a large degree, who can afford to live in a community. The 1990 Census reported that the median rent in Leesburg was \$622 per month, compared to \$682 in the county. The difference may be attributable to two factors:

- Single family detached units, which usually command higher rents, constitute a larger share of the rental inventory in the county than in the town.
- The town has most of the county's federally assisted rental units (see later discussion under Subsidized Housing).

Data on owner-occupied housing suggest that there is a potentially large market for moderately priced, owner-occupied housing in Leesburg:

- The median value of the town's owner-occupied homes increased from \$64,300 in 1980 to \$161,100 in 1990, a 49 percent increase when adjusted for inflation.
- The median value was about five percent lower than in the county (\$170,200) and 25 percent lower than in the Northern Virginia region (\$216,200). The difference between the town and county median values is probably attributable in part to the difference in housing mix. Townhouses (single-family attached) and multi-family condominiums constitute a greater share of the town's owner-occupied housing (37 percent), whereas 77 percent of the county's owner-occupied units are single family detached.

### Affordability

The cost of housing in the Washington, DC metropolitan area is among the highest in the country. Housing cost relative to income determines its affordability. According to 1990 Census data, Leesburg's \$161,100 median value of owner-occupied housing was twice the nationwide median of \$79,100. Yet Leesburg's median household income of \$39,887 was only one-third higher than the U.S. median of \$30,056. Affordability in all sectors of housing remains an overriding concern for Leesburg residents and potential residents.

What does "affordable" mean? One widely accepted definition, used by the American Association of Realtors, asks this question: Can a family with the median household income afford the median priced house? "Afford" means that the monthly payment on a traditional mortgage at the prevailing interest rate does

*Population, Housing, and Community Development Element*

not exceed 25% of the family's gross income. The ratio of the two figures (income percentage/mortgage payment) produces an "affordability index." If the index is 1 or greater, housing is considered affordable.

An analysis of Leesburg's income and cost data from the 1990 Census, using this methodology, suggests that affordability is a problem in Leesburg. The examples shown below use the "median family income" figure (which is higher than the median household income figure) because two-thirds of households were family households. This "median" family could afford monthly payments of \$930.

Loudoun County defines "affordable housing" as housing that can be afforded by a family with annual income between 30% and 70% of the median family income of the region. As of 1996, the median family income of the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area was \$68,300. The 30 to 70% range results in an income range of \$20,490 to \$47,810. Housing expenses (rent and utilities) for a family of four should not exceed 30% of family income. Therefore, housing which costs between \$6,147 and \$14,343 per year or between \$512 and \$1195 per month is considered affordable.

According to county policies, the type of assistance and type of occupancy depends on family income. For example, families with income below 30% of the region's median family income (below \$20,490 per year) are generally unable to afford housing without a subsidy, whether from a private source, such as another family, or from the public. Families earning between 30 and 50% of the region's median family income (between \$20,490 and \$34,150 per year) generally can only afford rental housing. Families earning between 50 and 70% are generally able to own their own home, usually a condominium apartment or a town house.

In addition to income, the cost of housing is a key component of affordability. For owner-occupied (for sale) housing, the housing cost used is the average asking price of vacant units for sale at the time of the census. The analysis assumes a 30-year mortgage for 90 percent of the sale price at 8 percent interest. The mortgage payment includes combined county and town real estate taxes at a rate of \$1.20 per \$100 valuation and insurance of \$30 monthly.

**Table 3.9**  
**Housing Affordability (1990)**  
(for median income families)

VACANT UNITS FOR SALE			
Average Price	90% Loan Amount	Mortgage Payment	Affordability Index
\$215,092	\$193,583	\$1,666	0.56

For sale housing affordable to families earning less than 70% of the regional median family income is set forth in Table 3.10. This shows that the Town of Leesburg provides the majority of affordable “for sale” housing units in the county.

**Table 3.10**  
**For Sale Housing Affordable to Families**  
**Earning Less Than 70% of Median Income**

Portion of County	Type of Dwelling Unit							
	Single Family Detached		Single Family Attached (townhomes)		Condominiums		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Leesburg	381	63%	90	34%	48	33%	519	51%
Sterling	0	0	149	56%	80	55%	229	23%
Purcellville, Lincoln, and Lovettsville	224	37%	27	10%	0	0	250	25%
Ashburn	0	0	0	0	17	12%	17	2%
<b>Total</b>	605	100%	266	100%	145	100%	1016	100%

Source: Loudoun County Affordable Dwelling Unit Program Fact Sheet, October 16, 1996

Considering the relatively small proportion of the Town’s population to the County’s (19%), the town contains a disproportionately large share of affordable housing.

Many factors influence the cost of housing. While basic construction costs do not vary greatly across the country, other factors can vary significantly. Among the most frequently cited are the cost of land and regulatory costs (e.g. zoning limitations on density, producing a lower yield of dwelling units per acre of land, and providing required infrastructure improvements to a prescribed standard). Other influences include general economic conditions and consumer tastes.

Local governments have little or no control over market-driven factors. However, the Town of Leesburg, through its regulatory authority, exercises control over three areas that could affect the cost of development:

- Density
- Land development regulations
- Review process

## **Specialized Housing Opportunities**

### **Subsidized Housing**

About 500 rental dwelling units in Leesburg are included in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's housing assistance programs for low- and moderate-income persons. In 1990 these federally-assisted units comprised 18 percent of the town's total of 2,846 rental units. By contrast, of the remaining 5,303 rental units in Loudoun County outside Leesburg, only 137 (or 2.6 percent) were federally assisted. Put another way, federally assisted units in Leesburg accounted for 79 percent of the 641 total in all of Loudoun County. In addition, about 160 households in Leesburg (71 percent of the county total of 228) received some form of rent assistance under the federal Section 8 program administered by the Virginia Housing Development Authority.

### **Housing for the Elderly**

There are eight housing facilities in Loudoun County offering independent and assisted living arrangements for the elderly. Of the total of 475 units, 197 (about 41 %) are in three facilities located in the Town of Leesburg. These include Madison House with 100 federally-subsidized independent living units, and two assisted living facilities: Morningside House with 67 units and Sunrise Retirement Home with 30 units.

## **POPULATION AND HOUSING PROJECTIONS**

### **Population Forecast**

#### **Past Trend**

Table 3.11 shows the historical trend of the town's share of the county's population. While both have grown rapidly since 1950, the town's rate of growth has been somewhat greater, so that its share of the total population has increased over time.

**Table 3.11**  
**Town Share of County Population, 1950 to 1990**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Loudoun</b>	<b>Leesburg</b>	<b>Town Share</b>
1950	21,147	1,703	8.1%
1960	24,549	2,869	11.7%
1970	37,150	4,821	13.0%
1980	57,427	8,357	14.6%
1990	86,129	16,202	18.8%
<i>Source: U.S. Censuses</i>			

Because of extensive development proposed or under way in eastern Loudoun, it is anticipated that the town's share of the total county population will peak and stabilize at 20 percent during the next ten years. This trend has been confirmed in estimates of town and county growth since the 1990 Census.



### Forecast

The population forecast for Leesburg is derived from the Loudoun County portion of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) projections for the region. The town's population is calculated as a percentage of the county's. Table 3.12 shows the COG projections for Loudoun County and the derivative projections for Leesburg. It should be noted that projections beyond 10 years are highly conjectural.

The Leesburg projections are based on growth anticipated within the present municipal boundaries only. Future population levels would be greater if the town were to annex developing portions of its Urban Growth Area. For example, residential development currently proposed in the eastern portion of the town's Urban Growth Area could house a population of about 7,000.

**Table 3.12**  
**Actual and Projected Population, 1990 - 2015**

<b>TOWN OF LEESBURG AND LOUDOUN COUNTY</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Loudoun</b>	<b>Leesburg</b>	<b>Town Share</b>
1990	86,129	16,202	18.8%
1995	106,350	20,750	19.5%
2000	129,800	25,700	19.8%
2005	154,500	30,900	20.0%
2010	180,500	36,100	20.0%
2015	208,100	41,600	20.0%
<i>Sources: 1990 U.S. Census and MWCOG Round V Forecast</i>			

### Housing Projection

Table 3.13 shows the approximate number of housing units that would be needed to accommodate the population growth projected in Table 3.12. This housing inventory need does not differentiate among housing types and assumes the same overall persons-per-unit and vacancy rates found in the 1990 Census.

**Table 3.13**  
**Housing Demand**  
**Based on Projected Population**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Housing Units</b>
1990	16,202	6,994
1995	20,750	8,800
2000	25,700	10,900
2005	30,900	13,100
2010	36,100	15,300
2015	41,600	17,600
<i>Source: Leesburg Planning Department</i>		

### Housing Pipeline

Table 3.14 below shows that there are nearly 1,700 housing units in the "pipeline" in Leesburg. When added to the 8,022 existing as of April 1, 1994, that number should be adequate to meet demand through 1997. "Pipeline" is defined variously by different jurisdictions. For purposes of this discussion, the pipeline is defined as unbuilt units in those developments for which a final subdivision plat has been recorded with the Clerk of Court or for which construction drawings have been approved by the town's Director of Engineering. These units require no further review or approval by the town, other than routine issuance of permits. Construction is dependent solely on buyer demand and the developer's capacity to build.

**Table 3.14**  
**1997 Projected Housing Inventory**

Source	Single Family Detached	Single Family Attached	Multi-family	Manufacture Home/ Other	TOTAL
Existing (Dec 93)	3,076	1,838	2,968	140	8,022
Remaining Pipeline*	796	626	250	---	1,672
Total	3,872	2,464	3,218	140	9,694
Source: Leesburg Planning Department					

The adequacy of this pipeline depends to a large extent on buyer demand. It is noteworthy that the potential inventory in the pipeline has a much larger proportion of single family units than the existing inventory. The units added in the past three years had roughly the same mix as the remaining pipeline, indicating that the pipeline is probably in line with market demand generally, though not necessarily with the needs of current Leesburg residents. As indicated in the affordability analysis presented above, housing for sale is relatively unaffordable to current Leesburg residents, and single family is typically the most expensive type of housing. This situation would suggest that there is a potential need for more multi-family housing or that the town should pursue regulatory changes that could help to reduce the development cost of housing generally.

### Residential Development Potential

As the Land Use element indicates, speculative development proposals during the 1980's produced an abundance of zoned but undeveloped land in all categories, including residential. The additional housing units proposed in rezoning actions approved by the Town Council and in subdivision plats or development plans having some level of Planning Commission approval would nearly double the town's current housing stock. Many of these proposals are currently inactive and will doubtless change over time as developers respond to economic conditions and market trends.

The rezoning applications, subdivision plats, and development plans that were under active review as of April 1, 1994, propose about 2,000 additional dwelling units. A potential new inventory of that size, when added to the pipeline described above, would appear adequate to meet the town's housing needs through the year 2002.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Community development involves maintaining and improving the physical environment in which the town's residents live and work--their homes, businesses, and public facilities. Leesburg has undertaken a number of significant community improvement projects, several through the federal government's Community Development Block Grant program. This section provides information on past projects and discusses the potential future focus of community development efforts.

### **Past Community Development Projects**

Since 1985 Leesburg has completed two major community improvement projects: the South Harrison Street Redevelopment Project and the East Market Street Design Study. The South Harrison Street project was a comprehensive redevelopment effort partially funded by a \$1.35 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This was the largest community development project undertaken by the town and involved public facility improvements, townhouse construction, housing rehabilitation, park construction, establishment of a farmer's market and business relocation and development. The Market Station development, which involved relocation and reconstruction of historic buildings into a retail/office center, was one of the most significant results of this HUD project.

The East Market Street Design Study proposed a public/private program to improve the physical appearance of Route 7 and provide a better entrance to Leesburg and the Historic District. The design study resulted in improvements by both public agencies and landowners along the corridor in landscaping, building setbacks, pedestrian access and signs.

Prior to the South Harrison Street project, the town completed three other HUD-funded community development projects: the Fairview storm sewer improvements in 1979, and Plaza Street Park and the Waverly Heights storm drainage facilities in 1980.

In more recent years, the town has completed a number of community improvement projects involving street widening, installation or replacement of curb, gutter and sidewalks, and storm drainage measures for sections of North, Church, Cornwall, and Loudoun Streets, Dry Mill Road, and Catoctin Circle. Similar improvements are planned for Plaza Street and for South King Street north of Catoctin Circle.

### **Future Focus**

Due to the town's continuing capital improvements and code enforcement efforts, there are no areas of town with extensive infrastructure deficiencies or deteriorated buildings. However, some of the older high density residential areas of town north of East Market Street near the Bypass lack some of the amenities required of new development (e.g., open space, landscaping, on-site recreation facilities). These areas could benefit from revitalization and beautification projects as well as provision of convenient public amenities such as neighborhood parks and playgrounds.

**GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

**Goal**

To maintain a balanced community with a wide range of housing and employment opportunities and services for present and future residents.

**Objectives**

- Preserve the quality of the town's existing housing stock.
- Encourage innovations in housing so that the demand may be met by a greater variety of type, design and layout of dwellings and more creative use of land and open space.
- Preserve neighborhood identity and keep the neighborhood as the town's basic organizational unit.
- Encourage development of large parcels in a comprehensive and balanced manner.
- Protect existing residential areas from commercial intrusion.
- Encourage residential uses in the downtown area.
- Promote revitalization of substandard areas.
- Encourage development of adequate housing for the elderly.

**IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

The policies and actions listed below are intended to assist Leesburg in maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for all town residents.

**Policies**

1. The town will encourage the provision of a wide range of housing opportunities by type, density and price to meet the needs of all residents.
2. The town will encourage housing development within the neighborhood framework, utilizing, where appropriate, community facilities such as schools, parks and commercial activities as focal points for development of new residential neighborhoods.
3. Residential infill in the downtown area will be encouraged.
4. The town will encourage additional elderly housing through developer incentives.
5. Leesburg will ensure that the development review process permits development in a timely manner consistent with town policies and standards.
6. The town will continue to identify and address community development problems, including substandard housing and public facility deficiencies.

**Action Program**

The following actions are recommended to help implement housing and community development objectives during the next five years.

1. Adopt new zoning measures or modify existing zoning to encourage a wider variety of housing types.
2. Continue a development review process study with the objective of improving the process.
3. Encourage elderly housing convenient to community services.
4. Continue town cooperation with and participation in federal, state and county housing assistance programs.
5. Prepare a community development plan for Leesburg which includes a detailed analysis of neighborhoods which may need community development assistance and a list of recommended community development projects for these areas within two years.
6. Encourage residential infill, revitalization and adaptive reuse downtown.
7. Review the zoning, subdivision, and development regulations to identify regulatory changes that effectively implement the policies of this element.

**Annual Population, Housing, and Community Development Element Review Criteria**

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of town community development plans and policies, track the following:

- New housing units approved by type and density.
- The number of elderly housing units.
- Vacancy rate.
- Neighborhood conditions and community facility needs.
- Review time required for land development applications.